DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 321 778 JC 900 324

TITLE The Academic Performance of Transfers from Virginia's Public Two-Year Institutions at James Madison University.
INSTITUTION James Madison Univ., Harrisonburg, Va.
PUB DATE May 89
NOTE 14p.; Product of the Office of Planning and Analysis.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Academic Achievement; College Credits; *College Transfer Students; Community Colleges; Enrollment Trends; Grade Point Average; Higher Education; Information Dissemination; *Intercollegiate Cooperation; State Surveys; *Transfer Policy; Two Year Colleges

ABSTRACT

In response to state guidelines which require senior institutions to provide two-year colleges with information on transfer students' academic performance, this report describes the procedures developed by James Madison University (JMU), in Virginia, to share information with the two-year colleges and presents results of a study of the academic performance of JMU transfers from Virginia's public two-year colleges. Following an introductory section, the report describes the methods used to determine the information needs of the two-year colleges and to protect the students' right to privacy. Next, results of the transfer student study are presented, indicating that: (1) unsolicited responses from two community colleges attested to the usefulness of the data collected; (2) 393 two-year college students transferred to JMU between 1985 and 1989; (3) four Virginia community colleges accounted for 72% of all of JMU's transfer students; (4) an average of 42.7 transfer credits were accepted per student, and more than half of the students transferred more than 40 credits; (5) 88.4% of the transfers were either on the president's list, dean's list, or in good standing; (6) the combined grade point average (GPA) of the transfers was 2.73, compared to 2.79 for all JMU students enrolled during fall 1988; and (7) transfers performed well in most disciplines except biology, chemistry, mathematics, physics, accounting, and economics, where the overall GPA was below 2.2. (WJT)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED321778

THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF TRANSFERS FROM VIRGINIA'S PUBLIC TWO-YEAR INSTITUTIONS AT JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

Conducted by:

Office of Planning and Analysis

James Madison University

May 1989

JC900324

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

F. Doherty

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction	1
Methodology	2
Results	3
Discussion	10

THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF TRANSFERS FROM VIRGINIA'S PUBLIC TWO-YEAR INSTITUTIONS AT JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

Introduction

James Madison University has historically maintained a close working relationship with Virginia's public two-year institutions because it feels that many of their students are sufficiently prepared to benefit from JMU's academic programs. Accordingly, JMU has accepted hundreds of transfers from these institutions over the last two decades. Several studies conducted by the Office of Planning and Analysis demonstrated that the vast majority of these transfers were successful academically at the University. Guideline 8 of the "Guidelines for Student Assessment," developed by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia at the direction of the Virginia General Assembly, now asks senior institutions to share on a regular basis information on transfer students with Virginia's state-supported two-year colleges. The purposes of this report are: 1) to describe the procedures developed by JMU to share information with the two-year institutions; and 2) to describe the results of a study of the academic performance at JMU of transfers from Virginia's public two-year institutions. The report will relate the results of the data analysis used to answer the following research questions.

1. What evidence exists that the process developed to share data with the two-year institutions has met the needs of these institutions?

2. How many former Virginia public two-year college students were enrolled during the 1988-89 academic year? From which colleges did the greatest number transfer? When did they transfer to JMU?

3. What was the average number of credits accepted by JMU from the students? What is the current academic level of the students who transferred credits?

4. How well have the transfer students performed academically at JMU? How well does their overall Quality Point Average (QPA) compare with all students? What is the academic statuses of the transfers? How many transfers either graduated or were to graduate during the 1988-89 academic year?

The methodology employed to answer these research questions is described below.

Methodology

Representatives of James Madison University met in June 1988 with representatives of several two-year institutions who transferred students to the University for the 1987-88 academic year to discuss the implementation of Guideline 8. JMU agreed to provide student-identifiable information to each institution as long as the institution agreed in writing to comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act as it applies to the sharing of data. Releases or waivers from individual students were not required under this arrangement.

The JMU Office of Planning and Analysis, in consultation with the two-year institutions, determined the data elements to be provided. After receiving a download of demographic and course-related data from the administrative computing center, a diskette containing the data elements for transfers from each two-year institution was mailed to each institution that signed the agreement form. Analysis of each institution's data was the responsibility of that institution. The data will be provided

annually for all transfers enrolled during the previous academic year. The data given to the two-year institutions includes students took a course at the institution prior to enrolling at JMU and who were enrolled during the 1988-89 regular session. The data for this study includes students who were listed by the Admissions Office as transfers to JMU during fall semesters 1988, 1987, 1986, and 1985.

The data analysis was performed on the data downloaded from the administrative computer. Analyses were performed using dBASE IV and ABSTAT, a microcomputer statistical program.

Results

The results are presented in a format which relates the findings to the guiding research questions. Each question presented in the introduction is stated again and is then followed by tables and explanations which relate to it.

1. What evidence exists that the process developed to share data with the two-year institutions has met the needs of these institutions?

The evidence used to determine whether the information shared with the two-year institutions is anecdotal at this point. A survey will be conducted later this year to determine the overall effectiveness of the methodology. Below are excerpts from several unsolicited letters received in response to JMU's method of sharing data.

The following letters were from two community colleges.

> "Thank you for sending the data diskette on our transfers to James Madison University. This information is by far the most useful that we have received under Guideline 8. We can only hope that other universities will follow your

> lead in this area. . . Enclosed is a brief report which I generated from the data you sent and our records. This report was prepared for our student outcomes assessment committee. They reviewed the report last week and were quite optimistic about the value of such feedback."
>
> "We certainly appreciate your leadership in Virginia in providing useful information to the community colleges in the assessment endeavor..."

The following letter was received from Dr. Gordon Davies, Director of the State Council of Higher Education.

> "Members of the Council staff tell me that your office has been very responsive in this statewide effort, and that community college personnel are pleased with the approach taken by JMU. Providing data each fall on all transfer students will allow community colleges to track student progress over time as well as in the first critical semester after transfer."

These unsolicited responses indicate that JMU has developed a strategy that will enable it to provide useful data to the two-year institutions in an efficient and timely manner.

2. How many former Virginia public two-year college students were enrolled during the 1988-89 academic year? From which colleges did the greatest number transfer? When did they transfer to JMU?

The answers to these questions, presented in tables 1 and 2, give an understanding of the large number of transfer students at JMU. Table 1 indicates that 393 students transferred to JMU during fall semesters 1988, 1987, 1986, and 1985. The four colleges with the greatest number of transfers, Northern Virginia Community College (N=122), Blue Ridge Community College (N=62), Lord Fairfax Community College (N=57) and Piedmont Virginia Community College (N=47). Together, these four colleges account for 72 percent of the transfers.

Table 2 shows the semester and year of first attendance for the study group.

TABLE 1

TRANSFERS ENTERING JMU DURING 8809, 8709, 8609, 8509
ENROLLED DURING 1988-89 REGULAR SESSION

COLLEGE	NUMBER
BLUE RIDGE	62
CNTRL VIRGINIA	20
DANVILLE	5
DABNEY LANCASTER	11
GERMANNA	13
J SARGNT REYNOLDS	10
LORD FAIRFAX	57
NEW RIVER	3
NORTHERN VIRGINIA	122
PAUL D CAMP	2
PATRICK HENRY	6
PIEDMONT VIRGINIA	47
RICHARD BLAND CLG	15
RAPPAHANNOCK	3
SOUTHSIDE VA	2
TIDEWATER	2
THOMAS NELSON	3
VIRGINIA HGHLNDS	1
VIRGINIA WSTRN	9
GRAND TOTAL	393

TABLE 2

SEMESTER AND YEAR OF FIRST ATTENDANCE

YR	MONTH	FREQ	CUM FREQ	%	CUM %
85	09	15	15	3.8	3.8
86	09	88	103	22.4	26.2
87	09	118	221	30.0	56.2
88	09	172	393	43.8	100.0
TOTAL		393	393	100.0	100.0

3. What was the average number of credits accepted by JMU from the students? What is the current academic level of the students who transferred credits?

An average of 42.7 transfer credits were accepted per student. Table 3 shows that more than half the students transferred more than 40 credits. Table 4 shows that 78.6 percent of the students are currently upper division students.

TABLE 3

CREDITS ACCEPTED

VALUE	FREQ	CUM FREQ	%	CUM %
LESS THAN 20	27	27	6.9	6.9
20 TO 40	160	187	40.7	47.6
MORE THAN 40	206	393	52.4	100.0
TOTAL	393	393	100.0	100.0

TABLE 4

CURRENT ACADEMIC LEVEL

VALUE	FREQ	%
FRESHMAN	4	1.0
SOPHOMORE	80	20.4
JUNIOR	152	38.7
SENIOR	157	39.9
TOTAL	393	100.0

4. How well have the transfer students performed academically at JMU? How well does their overall Quality Point Average (QPA) compare with all students? What is the academic statuses of the transfers? How many transfers either graduated or were to graduate during the 1988-89 academic year?

This is an important question because it relates to the most important assessment concern, the academic performance of the

students. Table 5 shows that 88.4 percent of the transfers were either on the President's List, Dean's List, or in Good Standing.

The average QPA of the transfers was 2.733, which compares to 2.79 for all JMU students enrolled during Fall 1988. Table 6 shows that 29.8 percent of the transfers have QPAs greater than 3.000. Fifty-four percent have QPAs between 3.000 and 2.001. Overall, 84 percent have QPAs greater than 2.000.

TABLE 5

ACADEMIC STANDING

VALUE	FREQ	%
PRESIDENT'S LIST	16	4.1
DEAN'S LIST	45	11.5
GOOD STANDING	286	72.8
WARNING	27	6.9
PROBATION	14	3.6
SUSPENSION	5	1.3
TOTAL	393	100.0

TABLE 6

QPA EARNED

VALUE	FREQ	CUM FREQ	%	CUM %
4.000 - 3.501	29	29	7.4	7.4
3.500 - 3.001	88	117	22.4	29.8
3.000 - 2.501	135	252	34.4	64.1
2.500 - 2.001	78	330	19.8	84.0
2.000 - 1.501	45	375	11.5	95.4
1.500 - 1.001	6	381	1.5	96.9
1.000 OR BELOW	12	393	3.1	100.0
TOTAL	393	393	100.0	100.0

Table 7 shows the QPA for courses within each discipline by level of course. For example, the QPA for all courses taken in Accounting is 2.138. For the most part, the transfers seemed to perform well in most disciplines, with a few notable exceptions. Disciplines in which the overall QPAs were below 2.200 were Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, Physics, Accounting, and Economics. Disciplines in which the QPA exceeded 3.25 were Library Science, Special Education, Living Sciences, Physical Education, and Speech Pathology and Audiology.

TABLE 7

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF TRANSFER STUDENTS
BY COURSE PREFIX

DISCIPLINE AREA	LOWER LEVEL QPA	NUMB RCDS	UPPER LEVEL QPA	NUMB RCDS	TOTAL QPA	TOTAL NUMB RCDS
ACCOUNTING	2.063	79	2.227	66	2.138	145
AMERICAN STUDIES	3.000	1			3.000	1
ANTHROPOLOGY	2.560	50	3.357	12	2.734	62
ART	2.851	121	3.258	67	2.991	188
BUSINESS ED.	2.238	21	2.400	13	2.296	34
BACH. GEN. ST.	4.000	5			4.000	5
BIOLOGY	1.873	61	2.541	35	2.108	96
BUSINESS LAW	2.865	156	2.615	13	2.846	169
CHEMISTRY	1.916	41	2.131	31	2.010	72
CLASSICS	3.000	2	1.500	2	2.250	4
COMMUNICATIONS	2.978	143	2.827	134	2.902	277
COMPUTER SCI.	2.448	35	2.545	11	2.475	46
DANCE	2.800	8			2.800	8
EARLY CHILD. ED.			3.400	20	3.400	20
ECONOMICS	2.100	231	2.250	4	2.102	235
EDUCATION			3.102	59	3.102	59
ELEMENTARY ED.			3.104	44	3.104	44
ENGLISH	2.602	98	2.729	48	2.643	146
ENGINEERING	3.000	2			3.000	2
FINANCE	2.353	17	2.686	105	2.639	122
FOREIGN LANG.	3.333	6	1.125	4	2.654	10
FRENCH	2.475	12			2.475	12
GEOGRAPHY	2.738	64	2.957	15	2.782	79
GEOLOGY	2.394	58	3.270	34	2.685	92
GERMAN	2.200	5			2.200	5

TABLE 7 CONTINUED

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF TRANSFER STUDENTS
BY COURSE PREFIX

DISCIPLINE AREA	LOWER LEVEL QPA	NUMB RCDS	UPPER LEVEL QPA	NUMB RCDS	TOTAL QPA	TOTAL NUMB RCDS
HISTORY	2.369	203	2.981	52	2.494	255
HOTEL RES. MGT.	2.960	11	2.579	19	2.695	30
HEALTH	3.438	14	3.063	59	3.139	73
HUMAN RES.	3.333	3			3.333	3
INFO. DEC. SCI.	2.436	345	2.890	96	2.546	441
INTERNAT. HUM.	3.500	2			3.500	2
ITALIAN	2.667	3			2.667	3
LATIN	1.500	2			1.500	2
LIVING SCIENCE	3.467	88	3.475	67	3.470	155
LIBRARY SCI.	3.586	24	3.463	30	3.532	54
MATHEMATICS	1.996	152	2.161	31	2.023	183
MANAGEMENT			2.870	239	2.870	239
MARKETING			2.605	157	2.605	157
MILITARY SCI.	3.333	2			3.333	2
MUSIC, APPLIED	3.471	17	3.424	22	3.440	39
MUSIC ED.			3.176	32	3.176	32
MUSIC INDUSTRY	3.000	3	3.000	2	3.000	5
MUSIC	3.005	81	3.383	22	3.071	103
PHYSICAL ED.	3.553	123	3.216	44	3.464	167
PHILOSOPHY	2.673	49	3.000	4	2.698	53
PHYSICS	2.136	33	2.250	4	2.149	37
POLITICAL SCI.	2.716	81	2.806	105	2.767	186
PSYCHOLOGY	2.812	171	2.853	132	2.830	303
PUBLIC ADMIN.	3.667	6	3.529	14	3.565	20
READING			3.323	31	3.323	31
RECREATION	3.600	2			3.600	2
RELIGION	2.667	21	3.500	2	2.739	23
RUSSIAN	2.571	4			2.571	4
SCIENCE			3.000	4	3.000	4
SECONDARY ED.	3.500	2	3.462	17	3.463	19
SOCIOLOGY	2.820	111	3.056	54	2.897	165
SOCIAL WORK	3.273	11	3.364	11	3.318	22
SPEECH PATH.	3.000	16	3.462	26	3.286	42
SPANISH	2.636	24			2.636	24
SPECIAL ED.	3.067	30	3.816	38	3.493	68
THEATRE	3.209	31	2.500	4	3.126	35
TRADE IND. ED.	3.000	1			3.000	1
JMU TOTAL	2.607	2,882	2.909	2,035	2.733	4,917

Table 8 shows the number of transfers who have either graduated or were scheduled to graduate during 1988-89. One of the graduates apparently returned to the University to take courses after graduating.

TABLE 8

SEMESTER OF GRADUATION

VALUE	FREQ	CUM FREQ	%	CUM %
8708	1	1	1.1	1.1
8812	27	28	29.3	30.4
8905	64	92	69.6	100.0
TOTAL	92	92	100.0	100.0

Discussion

The purpose of this paper was to report on the efforts taken by JMU to respond to the guidelines established by the Virginia General Assembly and to analyze the academic performance of the Virginia two-year public institution transfers at the University.

James Madison University appears to have developed procedures to efficiently share outcomes data with the two-year institutions. It seems that the procedures have met the needs of these institutions and have engendered considerable goodwill for the University.

The results of the analysis of the academic performance of the transfers is similar to the results of the analyses previously conducted by this office. The average QPA of the transfers is similar to the QPA for all JMU students. Over 88 percent of the transfers are either on the President's List, the Dean's List, or

are in Good Standing. Eighty-four percent of the students have QPAs greater than 2.000.

The academic performance of the transfers in disciplines appears to be a bit uneven. The QPAs in Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, Physics, Accounting, and Economics are not as high as the University would like. The academic performances in education-related courses, however, are quite acceptable.

The results of the current study suggests several follow-up studies. The Office of Planning and Analysis will survey the two-year institutions to determine if the data sharing procedures are adequate. While the results of analysis of the academic performance within disciplines will be discussed with the University community, a more detailed study of the academic performance of the transfers in specific disciplines needs to be accomplished. This follow-up study will compare the performance in each discipline of the transfers with students who entered the University as native first-time freshmen. A retention study of transfers will be conducted to determine how the transfers' persistence and graduation rates compare with the native students.

The overall conclusion to be realized from this study is that the transfers from the Virginia public two-year institutions continue to perform well at the University. The university parallel program continues to be a viable and attractive option for certain students whose eventual goal is a bachelor's degree from JMU.

ERIC Clearinghouse for
Junior Colleges

JUL 27 1990